Problems of sugar industries

1697. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sugar factories have become sick and are not paying dues to the sugarcane growers;

(b) the amount of sugar accumulation in the country;

(c) whether Government have any immediate plan to sell sugar in the international markets and thus release the locked up money and create liquidity in the sector;

(d) whether Government plan any strategy to help the sugarcane growers to receive economical price for their farm products; and

(e) if so, the deails thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Due to fall in the prices of free sale sugar, some sugar mills are finding it difficult to liquidate the cane price dues of the sugarcane purchased during the season 2001 -2002.

(b) As on 1.10.2002, the carry over stocks of sugar at the beginning of 2002-2003 sugar season are provisionally estimated at 106.63 lakh tonnes.

(c) The Government does not undertake any export ot sugar.The export of sugar is allowed freely under the Export-Import (EXIM) Policy and various sugar mills/exporters are exporting sugar as per their commercial judgement. A number of steps have also been taken to facilitate exports of sugar.

(d) and (e) Government of India announces the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane for each season. For the current 2002-2003 sugar season, the SMP of sugarcane has been fixed at Rs. 64.50 per quintal, linked to a basic recovery of 8.5% as against the SMP of Rs. 62.05 per quintal, linked to the basic recovery of 8.5% fixed for the previous sugar season 2001 -2002.